

BIRD BANDING DEPARTMENT

Under the Direction of Wm. I. Lyon, Waukegan, Ill.

In the opening of a Bird Banding Department in this Bulletin let us make these few statements about the origin of bird banding, which will be followed by a more detailed explanation of the early work in later editions.

Bird banding originated in North America early in the nineteenth century when Audubon placed some silver wire rings on the legs of young Phœbes in their nests and was rewarded the next season by seeing them in the same district.

Experimental work began in United States in 1901; then followed the work of P. A. Travener, Dr. J. B. Watson, New Haven Bird Club, Dr. Leon J. Cole as President of the American Bird Banding Association, and from 1914 to date the work of S. P. Baldwin in establishing systematic trapping as a far better means of getting returns.

In 1920 the United States Bureau of the Biological Survey formally took over all the work of recording and issuing all bands to the present workers.

The following are notes from The Bird Banders, from whom we have been able to get reports in the Great Lakes Migration District:

SAULT STE. MARIE, MICHIGAN, STATION

We welcome Mr. M. J. Magee as a new member in the Wilson Club and in the Bird Banding work and we expect to have some very interesting reports of Evening Grosbeaks that have been regular visitors with him for some time. When he gets this flock all banded we expect he will have many future returns. During the summer Mr. Magee was successful in placing bands on a Robin, Long-eared Owl, American Bittern, Pine Siskin, Hermit Thrush, Junco, four White-throats and two Song Sparrows and nine Purple Finches. Sault Ste. Marie is a choice location for migratory birds and we hope for many interesting returns from this point.

LAKE FOREST, ILLINOIS, STATION

(28 miles north of Chicago.)

Rev. George Roberts, Jr., is an old member of the American Bird Banding Association and placed several bands in 1917, 1919 and 1920. He was rewarded by having a Rose-breasted Grosbeak that was banded on May 25, 1919, return to be retaken and released on May 2, 1920. He has a lot of bands and a trap all set awaiting the spring migration and he has our best wishes for success during the coming season.

HIGHLAND PARK, ILLINOIS, STATION

(23 miles north of Chicago.)

Professor Jesse Lowe Smith, one of our most reliable bird workers and editor of the Illinois Audubon Bulletin, has two new traps made on the pattern of the two most successful traps used at the Waukegan station. We expect many returns from his work, and we also hope he will

be able to induce some of the many good bird people in Highland Park to join him in his work.

WHITING, INDIANA, STATION
(18 miles south of Chicago.)

Mr. Fred C. Hadley and Dr. C. P. McNeil are working together in the bird banding work, and from other sources of information we learn that they have been successful in placing about one hundred bands, which is a very good beginning. Whiting is located just at the southeast corner of Lake Michigan, right where they should have a real chance to get an extra record of the birds from the other stations as they leave the lake. We hope to have a more detailed report of their work in next issue.

Mr. Hadley reports the success of his first season's work as follows:

Bands placed, 86, on twelve species: Catbird 39, Black-billed Cuckoo 10, Yellow-billed Cuckoo 2, Robin 6, Mourning Dove 6, Brown Thrasher 5, Red-winged Blackbird 4, House Wren 1, Long-billed Marsh Wren 4, Green Heron 3, Yellow Warbler 2, Dickcissel 2, Song Sparrow 1.

HOBART, INDIANA, TRAPPING STATION

(Five miles south of the center of the south end of Lake Michigan.)

We wish to welcome our new member in the Wilson Club and in Bird Banding, Mr. Donald H. Boyd, of Hobart, Indiana. Mr. Boyd's location just south of the center of Lake Michigan gives him a wonderful opportunity to trap many of the birds that have followed the shores in their migration and passed the other trapping stations, so he has the best chance for records on account of position. Mr. Boyd writes that he has made some traps and will be ready for the spring migration. During the nesting season he was able to place twenty-eight bands on birds in the nest, including Robins, House Wrens, Mourning Doves, Kingbirds, Martin, Warbling Vireo, and Cowbird. The traps are working now and we expect to have a fine report in the next Bulletin from Mr. Boyd.

We envy the above three workers in Indiana because they are good friends so close together that they can compare notes on their work. For eight years the Waukegan station has been all alone, with no one to go to in our joys and sorrows.

WANTED—MORE BIRD BANDERS

The Central District needs more workers, can YOU join? If not able, will YOU make it your duty to induce some one to undertake the work. We should not say work, because if you use a flat trap with a stick under one side and string to your window, keep feed under it at all times as a feeding station, then pull the string only when convenient, in this way you can do much good work with little effort.

MILWAUKEE, WISCONSIN, STATION

Mr. H. L. Stoddard is planning to take up trapping and banding at Milwaukee, thus extending the stations to the northward.

WAUKEGAN, ILLINOIS, STATION
(56 miles north of Chicago.)

The Waukegan Bird Banding Station has been at work since 1914 and we can only give a small part of their work at this time.

In 1914, 10 bands were placed; in 1915, 29; in 1916, 51; in 1917, 118; in 1918, 32; in 1919, 17; in 1920, 360; in 1921, 1100.

The past year was by far the busiest and the Biological Survey reports that they have the largest record of the year in the United States.

Including House Sparrows and the number of times birds repeat, the total number of birds handled at the station was 2678.

To the first of the year the station has had twenty returns, five of them were recovered away from the district and fifteen recovered locally, and one of those returned for the third time.

DETAIL OF TRAPPINGS IN 1921.

	Former Total	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
Robin	188			4	13	29	12	8		1				245
Junco	55	3	5	55	30						78	70	9	306
Downy Woodpecker		1	1		1		4					5	3	15
Chickadee			1									22		23
White-throated Sparrow...163					10	32					169	2		366
White-crowned Sparrow... 4						28					1			33
Fox Sparrow	1			1	3						10	5		20
Song Sparrow	8			1	12		3	11			1			36
Field Sparrow				1	3									4
House Sparrow			2	2	6	72	78	217	131	14	17	17	18	503
Vesper Sparrow						4								4
Tree Sparrow												8	3	11
Towhee	19				1	6	1				6			33
Brown Thrasher	44				2	6	4	3	2	1	1			63
Northern Flicker	25				1	5	5							36
Red-winged Blackbird 21							4	1						26
Bronzed Grackle	25			3	21	27	12	8	1					97
Mourning Dove	16						4	3	1	1				25
Catbird	20					3	6							29
Barn Swallow	8						3	5						16
House Wren.	3						16	1						20
Blue Jay	1				1	1					2	2	1	8
Hermit Thrush					2						2			4
Northern Shrike					1						2	2		4
White-breasted Nuthatch..											2	2		4

Less than 4: Savannah Sparrow 2, Swamp Sparrow 1, Harris Sparrow 1, Chipping Sparrow 2, Red-headed Woodpecker 3, Bluebird 3, Oven-bird 3, Kingbird 3, Screech Owl 2, Black-poll Warbler 1, Yellow Warbler 1, Bittern 1, Rose-breasted Grosbeak 1, Indigo Bunting 1, Crow 1, Olive-backed Thrush 1, Water-Thrush 1, Cowbird 2, Spotted Sandpiper 3, Baltimore Oriole 3, Crested Flycatcher 2, Wood Thrush 1, Myrtle Warbler 2.

THE NEW ENGLAND BIRD BANDING ASSOCIATION

On the seventeenth day of January, 1922, in response to an invitation from Mr. L. B. Fletcher and others interested in the banding of birds, over a hundred ornithologists, licensed bird-banders and candidates for licenses, met at the Boston Society of Natural History Building in Boston and organized a new ornithological society to be known as the New England Bird Banding Association. The meeting was addressed by S. Prentiss Baldwin of Cleveland, Ohio, who, during the last six years, by introducing bird-trapping as a means of banding birds, has done so much to show the scientific possibilities of the work. The Bureau of

Biological Survey in Washington was represented by Major E. A. Goldman, who spoke of the Bureau's plans in connection with the movement, strongly endorsing the organization of the new association and recommending the formation of other organizations of the same character at appropriate localities in the United States and Canada.

Members of Audubon Societies and Bird Clubs in several states, the Nuttall and Essex County Ornithological Clubs and State ornithologists were present at the meeting, as well as representatives of the Canadian game warden service.

At this writing, January 24th, 1922, the association has an enrollment of about three hundred members, who are scattered over all parts of the territory covered by the organization, namely, New England, Quebec and the Maritime Provinces.

The following officers and councillors were elected:

President—Edward H. Forbush, Westboro, Mass.

First Vice-President—Dr. Charles W. Townsend, Boston, Mass.

Second Vice-President—James Mackaye, Cambridge, Mass.

Corresponding Secretary and Treasurer—Laurence B. Fletcher, Brookline, Mass.

Recording Secretary—Miss Alice B. Harrington, Lincoln, Mass.

COUNCILLORS

A. Cleveland Bent, Tauton, Miss.

Dr. John C. Phillips, Wenham, Mass.

John E. Thayer, Lancaster, Mass.

William P. Wharton, Groton, Mass.

Aaron C. Bagg, Holyoke, Mass.

Charles L. Whittle, Cambridge, Mass.

It may be of interest to ornithologists generally to read an outline of the purposes and plans of the new association, which has been formed under the stimuli furnished by the national movement administered by the Bureau of Biological Survey; by the more general appreciation of the scientific aspects of bird banding as shown, in particular, by Mr. Baldwin's recent work; and by the interesting and valuable data already obtained by previous bird-banding operations.

In the beginning it was felt that the somewhat disappointing results secured from banding in the United States to date were due to the workers being too scattered and uncoordinated; to a lack of national support of the plan, and the too general character of the ornithological problems bird-banding operations were expected to solve.

From a study of the situation we came to believe that we could obtain the best results

- (1) By organizing a regional association of bird banders, meaning by this, bringing together a membership from an area possessing one or more migration highways, along which trapping stations may be established to furnish, by intensive attack, fairly speedy answers to certain specific migration problems, thus early demonstrating to members the scientific value of bird banding with the consequent stimulus to continue the work which it is expected will ultimately solve more ornithological riddles, aid

in the solution of others and create new problems not now anticipated;

- (2) By having the members meet together as often as possible to discuss results, methods and future plans and to gather inspiration from their fellows after the manner of scientific societies generally, in this way using the combined knowledge of the Association to advance the work;
- (3) By appealing for the support of Audubon Societies all over the country on the ground that bird banding is a bird-protection movement, since to an important extent, it will be possible in the future to substitute an examination of a live bird for the study of a dead one;
- (4) By ensuring as far as possible the *permanence* of the movement by means of institutional trapping stations operated by or in connection with Audubon Societies, Natural History Societies, Bird Clubs, Departments of Ornithology or Zoölogy at colleges and universities, Bird Sanctuaries, State and National Parks, etc., in addition to stations operated by individuals; and
- (5) By establishing a convenient local depository of all bird-banding records made by members (an exact copy of the same of course being sent to the Biological Survey) in appropriate quarters where they may be studied by members of the Association and others.

CHARLES L. WHIPPLE.

Cambridge, Mass.

FIELD NOTES

NOTES ON SOME NEBRASKA BIRDS OF THE WINTER OF 1921-22

Subsequent to the several records already published of the occurrence of the Magpie in unusual numbers in southeastern Nebraska during the fall of 1921, Mr. H. Ohler of Lincoln, reported seeing several of these birds at Pleasant Dale on November 20, and during December there were other additional records. The flock of Magpies near Fairbury were yet there on January 8, 1922, associating with crows and apparently on the best of terms with them, according to Mrs. H. F. Hole of that city.

Along with the Magpie has come an invasion, to a less marked degree, by the Pinyon Jay. Dr. R. H. Wolcott had reported to him, and personally verified it, the occurrence of one of these birds north of Lincoln, on November 24, 1921. Under date of January 22, 1922, Mrs. Ralph Pembroke of Harvard, Nebraska, writes that one of these birds has been present about the town of Harvard since late in November, 1921, and that on January 15, 1922, a flock of ten or twelve of these birds was seen there.

Three individuals of the Bohemian Waxwing were noted by R. W. Dawson at Lincoln on November 6, 1921, but the species was not subsequently noted. On January 28, 1922, however, C. A. Black reported them as present in abundance at Kearney, Buffalo county.

A Mockingbird is now wintering in the city of Lincoln, in the yard